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COMMITTEE ON THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD
Twentieth session
Geneva, 11-29 January 1999
Item 7 of the provisional agenda

METHODS OF WORK OF THE COMMITTEE

Compilation of the conclusions and recommendations adopted by the Committee on the Rights of the Child

Note by the Secretariat

1. At its fourth session, the Committee on the Rights of the Child decided to make available for general distribution a compilation of the conclusions and recommendations adopted at previous sessions. The Committee also decided that this compilation should be updated on a regular basis in the future.

2. The texts of the conclusions and recommendations adopted by the Committee at its first to nineteenth sessions are contained in the annex to the present document.

Annex

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS ADOPTED BY THE COMMITTEE ON THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD AT ITS FIRST TO NINETEENTH SESSIONS

Page

I. ORGANIZATION OF WORK 4

First session, Recommendation 1
Fourth session, Recommendation 1
Fifth session, Recommendation 1
Fifth session, Recommendation 2
Sixteenth session, Recommendation
Seventeenth session, Recommendation 1

II. STRENGTHENING THE SUPPORT TO THE COMMITTEE 8

Fourth session, Recommendation 2

III. INFORMAL REGIONAL MEETINGS 8

Second session, Recommendation 1
Fourth session, Recommendation 3
Seventh session, Recommendation 2

IV. SOURCES OF INFORMATION 11

First session, Recommendation 2
Second session, Recommendation 2

V. PUBLIC INFORMATION ACTIVITIES 13

First session, Recommendation 4
Second session, Recommendation 3
Third session, Recommendation 2
Sixth session, Recommendation 1

VI. DOCUMENTATION UNIT ON THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD 16

Third session, Recommendation 4

VII. RELATIONS WITH OTHER UNITED NATIONS ORGANS AND TREATY BODIES . . 16

First session, Recommendation 3
Second session, Recommendation 4
Third session, Recommendation 3
Fourth session, Recommendation 4
Fifth session, Recommendation 3
Sixth session, Recommendation 2
Sixth session, Recommendation 3
Eighth session, Recommendation
Ninth session, Recommendation
Eleventh session, Recommendation
Seventeenth session, Recommendation 2

CONTENTS (continued)

		Page
VIII.	MEETING OF PERSONS CHAIRING THE HUMAN RIGHTS TREATY BODIES . . .	27
	Second session, Recommendation 5	
IX.	WORLD CONFERENCE ON HUMAN RIGHTS - RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE PREPARATORY COMMITTEE	29
	First session, Recommendation 5 Third session, Recommendation 5	
X.	CHILDREN IN ARMED CONFLICTS	30
	Third session, Recommendation 1 Fourth session, Recommendation 5 Sixth session, Recommendation 2 Seventh session, Recommendation 1 Nineteenth session, Recommendation	
XI.	ADVISORY SERVICES AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE	33
	Seventh session, Recommendation 3	

I. ORGANIZATION OF WORK

First session. Recommendation 1

Sessions of the Committee or its subsidiary bodies

The Committee on the Rights of the Child, 1/

Recalling the rapid entry into force of the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the unprecedented number of ratifications, which demonstrate a widespread commitment to the promotion and protection of the rights of the child,

Aware of the high expectations for effectiveness in the functioning of the Committee, which constitutes an essential mechanism for the implementation of the provisions of the Convention,

Noting that the initial reports of some 100 States parties will need to be considered by the Committee in a timely and thorough manner between 1992 and 1996, at which time the second periodic reports will start to be due,

Concerned about the workload of the Committee and the risk of building up an undesirable backlog in the consideration of such reports,

Convinced of the need to adopt urgent measures to deal with this situation,

1. Requests the General Assembly to authorize the Secretary-General to schedule at least two regular sessions of the Committee annually as from 1993, as well as to schedule in 1992, in addition to the Committee's second session, a one-week Working Group of the Whole to prepare for the consideration of the first round of States parties' reports;

2. Also requests the General Assembly to authorize the establishment of a pre-sessional Working Group that would meet approximately two months in advance of each session to conduct a preliminary review of reports submitted under article 44 of the Convention and to consider questions relating to technical assistance and international cooperation pursuant to article 45 of the Convention.

Fourth session. Recommendation 1

Sessions of the Committee and its subsidiary bodies

The Committee on the Rights of the Child, 2/

Recalling the rapid entry into force of the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the historical number of States parties, which demonstrate a widespread commitment to the promotion and protection of the rights of the child,

Aware of the high expectations for effectiveness in the functioning of the Committee, which constitutes an essential mechanism for the implementation of the provisions of the Convention,

Concerned about the workload of the Committee and the risk of building up an undesirable backlog in the consideration of such reports,

Noting the concern expressed by the Commission on Human Rights at the increasingly heavy workload of the Committee and the resulting difficulties faced by it in the fulfilment of its functions,

Recalling the recommendation made by the World Conference on Human Rights that the Committee, with the assistance of the Centre for Human Rights, be enabled expeditiously and effectively to meet its mandate, especially in view of the unprecedented extent of ratification and subsequent submission of country reports,

Recognizing the need to adopt urgent and adequate solutions to deal with this situation in order not to dash the expectations the Convention has created,

1. Decides, in accordance with rule 3 of its provisional rules of procedure, to convene a special session of the Committee in 1994;

2. Also decides that the special session should be preceded by a meeting of its established working group to conduct a preliminary review of reports submitted under article 44 of the Convention and to consider questions relating to technical assistance and international cooperation pursuant to article 45 of the Convention;

3. Further decides to fix the dates of the special session and the pre-sessional working group in consultation with the Secretary-General, taking into account the calendar of conferences as approved by the General Assembly.

Fifth session, Recommendation 1

The Committee on the Rights of the Child, 3/

Recalling that the Convention on the Rights of the Child has become, within an exceptionally short period, the international human rights instrument with the largest number of ratifications, demonstrating the international community's special commitment to the promotion and protection of the rights of children,

Concerned about the workload of the Committee and the risk of building up an undesirable backlog in the consideration of State party reports submitted pursuant to article 44 of the Convention,

Recalling that the Commission on Human Rights has also expressed concern at the increasingly heavy workload of the Committee and the resulting difficulties faced by it in the fulfilment of its functions,

Recalling also the recommendation made by the World Conference on Human Rights that the Committee, with the assistance of the Centre for Human Rights, be enabled expeditiously and effectively to meet its mandate, especially in view of the unprecedented extent of ratifications and subsequent submission of country reports,

Convinced that having an adequate amount of time for the meetings of the Committee is a vital factor in ensuring the continued effectiveness of the Committee in future years,

1. Requests the Secretary-General to convene a Meeting of the States Parties to the Convention on the Rights of the Child, in advance of or during the course of the forty-ninth session of the General Assembly, with a view to reviewing, pursuant to paragraph 10 of article 43 of the Convention, the duration of the meetings of the Committee;

2. Further requests, in accordance with the above-mentioned provision of the Convention, the States parties to determine that the number of annual sessions of the Committee as from 1995, as well as the number of sessions of the working group established to conduct a preliminary review of State party reports and to consider questions relating to technical assistance and international cooperation, should be increased to three;

3. Requests the General Assembly at its forty-ninth session to approve any such determination that may be adopted by the States parties;

4. Decides to fix the dates of such third regular session and of its pre-sessional working group in consultation with the Secretary-General, taking into account the calendar of conferences as approved by the General Assembly.

Fifth session, Recommendation 2

Special session of the Committee in 1994

The Committee on the Rights of the Child, 4/

Noting the previous conclusions and recommendations it has adopted in order to ensure effectiveness to its work and prevent the building up of an undesirable backlog in the consideration of States parties' reports,

Stressing the need to adopt urgent and adequate solutions to meet the high expectations created by the Convention on the Rights of the Child and its system of implementation,

Recalling in particular the decision adopted at its fourth session to convene a special session of the Committee in 1994, in accordance with rule 3 of its rules of procedure,

Noting that, pursuant to article 44, paragraph 5, of the Convention, and in accordance with rule 64 of its rules of procedure, the Committee will submit to the General Assembly, through the Economic and Social Council, every two years, reports on its activities,

Recalling that the biennial report of the Committee will only be examined during the forty-ninth session of the General Assembly, to take place at the end of 1994,

Reaffirms the decisive importance and urgency of holding such a special session in 1994, preceded by a pre-sessional working group meeting, as an essential measure in facing its workload in an effective and expeditious manner, in the light of the recommendation of the World Conference on Human Rights.

Sixteenth session, Recommendation

The Committee on the Rights of the Child, 5/

Having considered the report of the Eighth Meeting of Persons Chairing the Human Rights Treaty Bodies (A/52/507),

Agrees on the following:

1. In view of the specificities of each of the six human rights treaties, the consolidation of reports to the six human rights treaty bodies into a single report would not be conducive to the implementation of the rights enshrined in each treaty, including the Convention on the Rights of the Child;

2. The suggestion to convene an extraordinary three-day meeting of the chairpersons in February 1998 is welcome as it would provide an opportunity to further explore the issue of possible reforms designed to enhance the effectiveness and efficiency of the treaty body system;

3. While taking due account of the general guidelines regarding the form and contents of periodic reports adopted by the Committee at its thirteenth session (CRC/C/58), the States parties to the Convention on the Rights of the Child should focus on a limited range of issues in their periodic report, in particular those issues identified in the concluding observations adopted by the Committee in relation to the previous report.

Seventeenth session, Recommendation 1

The Committee on the Rights of the Child, 6/

Having considered the order of consideration of the reports submitted to it by the States parties to the Convention,

Agrees on the following:

1. Although the Convention on the Rights of the Child does not require the presence of the representatives of the States parties at the meetings during which their respective reports are examined by the Committee, such a presence is highly desirable;

2. Rule 68 of the Provisional Rules of Procedure of the Committee establishes that "representatives of the States parties shall be invited to attend the meetings of the Committee when their reports are examined". The intention underlying this rule is to enable an effective and constructive dialogue between the Committee and the reporting States, which can be facilitated by the attendance of high-level representatives of the States parties;

3. Notwithstanding the desirability of such a dialogue, the Committee may use its right to examine reports even in the absence of a positive reaction on the part of a State party to the invitation to attend the meetings of the Committee. Such an approach is deemed necessary in order to enable the Committee to meet its mandate and heavy workload expeditiously and efficiently.

II. STRENGTHENING THE SUPPORT TO THE COMMITTEE

Fourth session. Recommendation 2

The Committee on the Rights of the Child, 7/

Having considered its workload in view of the unprecedented number of States parties reports expected to be submitted under article 44 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child,

Having reviewed its general working conditions, and recalling the importance of dealing with States parties reports without delay in order not to dash the expectations created around the rights of the child,

Recognizing the importance of paying due attention to the field of technical assistance and international cooperation pursuant to article 45 of the Convention,

Encouraged by the recommendation of the World Conference on Human Rights that the Committee, with the assistance of the Centre for Human Rights, be enabled expeditiously and effectively to meet its mandate,

Convinced of the need to adopt urgent measures for the servicing of the Committee,

Requests the Secretary-General to strengthen the support to the Committee and to provide it with a minimum of two additional professional and one additional General Services posts.

III. INFORMAL REGIONAL MEETINGS

Second session. Recommendation 1

The Committee on the Rights of the Child, 8/

Reaffirming the consideration it has previously made on the usefulness of organizing meetings in different regions of the world in order to enhance implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child,

Encouraged by the successful results of the first informal regional meeting of the Committee, in the Latin American and Caribbean region, held in Quito, Ecuador, in June 1992,

Recognizing the important role informal regional meetings can play in promoting greater awareness of the principles and provisions of the Convention on the Rights of the Child and of the work of the Committee, as well as in enabling the members of the Committee to acquire a deeper knowledge and better understanding of the realities in a region,

Convinced of the relevance of these meetings to meaningfully enhance international cooperation and joint efforts between the different United Nations bodies, specialized agencies and other competent bodies active in the field of the implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child,

Welcoming the decision of the United Nations Children's Fund to facilitate the Quito meeting in close cooperation with other United Nations bodies, and the efforts made in order to ensure its success,

Stressing the importance of the participation in such regional meetings of non-governmental organizations active in the field of the rights of the child,

1. Welcomes the opportunity given to the Committee to hold the first informal regional meeting in Quito, Ecuador;

2. Expresses its thanks to the host Government of Ecuador for the warm welcome it extended at the opening of the informal regional meeting of the Committee;

3. Recognizes the importance of such meetings to contribute to a wider promotion of the rights of the child;

4. Welcomes the possibility of holding other informal regional meetings, whenever possible on an annual basis.

Fourth session, Recommendation 3

The Committee on the Rights of the Child, 9/

Reaffirming that informal regional meetings can play an important role in promoting greater awareness of the Convention on the Rights of the Child and of the work of the Committee, as well as in enabling the members of the Committee to acquire a deeper knowledge and better understanding of the realities in a given region,

Convinced of the relevance of these meetings in meaningfully enhancing international cooperation and the joint efforts of the different United Nations bodies, specialized agencies and other competent bodies active in the field of the rights of the child,

Stressing the importance of the participation in such meetings of non-governmental organizations active in the field of the rights of the child,

Welcoming the decision of the United Nations Children's Fund to facilitate the meetings held at Quito in 1992 and Bangkok in 1993, in close cooperation with other United Nations bodies, and the efforts made to ensure their success,

1. Emphasizes the decisive role of informal regional meetings in contributing to a wider promotion of the rights of the child;

2. Recognizes the importance of such meetings for achieving universal ratification of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, as well as its effective implementation, as recommended by the World Conference on Human Rights;

3. Welcomes the possibility of holding other informal regional meetings, whenever possible on an annual basis.

Seventh session. Recommendation 2

The Committee on the Rights of the Child, 10/

Reaffirming the decisive role regional meetings can play in promoting greater awareness of the Convention on the Rights of the Child and of the work of the Committee, as well as providing the members of the Committee with a deeper knowledge and better understanding of the realities of a given region,

Convinced of the relevance of these meetings for enhancing international cooperation and joint efforts between United Nations bodies, the specialized agencies and other competent bodies active in the field of the rights of the child,

Reiterating the importance of the participation in such meetings of non-governmental organizations active in the field of the rights of the child,

Recalling that the implementation of the Convention is a dynamic and continuous process, designed to ensure the realization of the fundamental rights of children and the progressive improvement of their situation,

Recognizing that informal regional meetings are of the greatest relevance to achieve universal ratification of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, as well as its effective implementation, as recommended by the World Conference on Human Rights,

Welcoming the richness and diversity of the experiences gained in its visit to different African countries, in the course of its third regional informal meeting,

1. Reaffirms the decisive role of informal regional meetings in contributing to a wider promotion of the rights of the child;

2. Welcomes the possibility of continuing to hold informal regional meetings, as well as of undertaking future trips by some of its members to particular countries, with a view to encouraging universal ratification of the Convention, contributing to its effective implementation and, whenever appropriate, ensuring a follow-up to the consideration of a State party report by the Committee.

IV. SOURCES OF INFORMATION

First session. Recommendation 2

The Committee on the Rights of the Child, 11/

Recalling the conclusion of the Third Meeting of the Persons Chairing the Human Rights Treaty Bodies that "each of the treaty bodies should have access to all of the sources of information that it feels it needs in order to be effective", and bearing in mind that the information provided by non-governmental organizations and the experience and knowledge of the specialized agencies and other bodies of the United Nations have been recognized as having particular importance,

Considering that access by the Committee to all relevant sources of information pertaining to its functions will be essential to ensuring the effective performance of its activities,

1. Requests the Secretary-General to establish, as proposed by the Second and Third Meetings of Persons Chairing the Human Rights Treaty Bodies, a committee resource room for the purpose of gathering and facilitating access to the various sources of information that are indispensable for the effective functioning of the Committee;

2. Requests the secretariat to report, at the beginning of each session, on the action taken pursuant to decisions adopted by the Committee at its previous session;

3. Requests the secretariat to provide a documentary basis for the presentation by the Rapporteur or another designated member of the Committee of a comprehensive report on developments relevant to the work of the Committee that have occurred since the preceding session;

4. Requests the secretariat to organize country files and to prepare an analytical study of available information concerning each State party whose report is to be considered by the Committee, taking into account both the reporting guidelines and data emerging from reports that have been submitted by the same State party before other treaty bodies;

5. Requests the secretariat to submit, at the beginning of each session, a list of reports received and those pending consideration in order to enable the Committee to plan its future work in an effective way;

6. Requests the secretariat to submit to the Committee an updated list of reservations and objections to reservations to the Convention on the Rights of the Child;

7. Requests the secretariat to submit to the Committee a compilation of international instruments relevant to the work of the Committee, taking into account relevant instruments adopted by the various United Nations organs and specialized agencies as well as relevant recommendations and resolutions, as appropriate;

8. Requests the secretariat to provide the Committee with a compilation of the general comments and general recommendations adopted by the various human rights treaty bodies;

9. Requests the Secretary-General to strengthen, in the context of the technical assistance and advisory services programme of the Centre for Human Rights, the training activities related to the implementation of the Convention and, pursuant to the recommendation of the Third Meeting of Persons Chairing the Human Rights Treaty Bodies, to consider organizing seminars and workshops at the national level for the purpose of training those involved in the preparation of State party reports to prepare these reports in accordance with the reporting guidelines.

Second session, Recommendation 2

The Committee on the Rights of the Child, 12/

Recalling that, as recognized by the Third Meeting of the Persons Chairing the Human Rights Treaty Bodies, "each of the treaty bodies should have access to all of the sources of information that it feels it needs in order to be effective",

Bearing in mind the importance of the information that can be provided to the Committee by the United Nations bodies, specialized agencies and other competent bodies, in view of their experience and knowledge in the field of the rights of the child,

Reaffirming that access by the Committee to all relevant sources of information pertaining to its functions will be essential to ensure effective performance of its activities,

1. Reiterates the request addressed to the Secretary-General to establish a committee resource room for the purpose of gathering and facilitating access to the various sources of information that are indispensable for the effective functioning of the Committee;

2. Requests the secretariat to report at the beginning of each session on the action taken pursuant to decisions adopted by the Committee at its previous sessions;

3. Also requests the secretariat to continue to organize country files and to prepare an analytical study of available information concerning each State party whose report is to be considered by the Committee, in the light of the adopted reporting guidelines;

4. Encourages United Nations bodies, specialized agencies and other competent bodies, in order to foster the effective implementation of the Convention, to provide the Committee with relevant information concerning each State party whose report is scheduled to be considered by the Committee;

5. Expresses concern at the difficulties faced and the delay taken in expediting the implementation of the recommendations of the task force on computerization appointed by the Secretary-General with a view to increasing the efficiency and effectiveness of the functioning of the treaty bodies;

6. Recognizes the high priority of the computerization of the work of the treaty-monitoring bodies and its importance to improve the reporting system and encourages the next Meeting of Persons Chairing the Human Rights Treaty Bodies to give particular consideration to this reality and envisage the adoption of adequate and urgent recommendations;

7. Decides to establish a working group among its members to consider the question of the system of information and documentation relevant to its work, including the question of computerization, in cooperation with the Centre for Human Rights, United Nations bodies and other competent bodies.

V. PUBLIC INFORMATION ACTIVITIES

First session, Recommendation 4

The Committee on the Rights of the Child, 13/

Recognizing the importance of disseminating information concerning the Convention on the Rights of the Child and on its implementation so as to create greater awareness and a deeper understanding of its principles and provisions,

1. Requests the Secretary-General to ensure, as recommended by the Second and Third Meetings of Persons Chairing the Human Rights Treaty Bodies, that the United Nations Information Centres make freely available on a routine basis the documents of the Committee for general distribution, particularly the reports of the Committee, the reports submitted to the Committee by the State in whose territory the information centre is located, and the summary records relating to the examination of such reports;

2. Requests the Secretary-General to provide for, and to facilitate and encourage, the dissemination of information concerning the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the work of the Committee.

Second session, Recommendation 3

The Committee on the Rights of the Child, 14/

Recognizing the importance of disseminating information on the Convention on the Rights of the Child and its implementation with a view to creating greater awareness and a deeper understanding of its principles and provisions and to promote the full realization of children's rights,

1. Welcomes the publication of an issue of the Bulletin of Human Rights on the Rights of the Child;

2. Requests the Secretary-General to provide for, and to facilitate and encourage, the dissemination of information concerning the Convention and the work of the Committee, in particular:

(a) To consider the translation of the Convention into different languages, inter alia by issuing Fact Sheet No. 10 "The Rights of the Child" in different additional languages;

(b) To consider the inclusion in the Manual on Human Rights Reporting of a chapter concerning the mechanism established within the framework of the Convention on the Rights of the Child;

(c) To ensure priority to the completion and issuance of the Travaux préparatoires and the Commentary on the Convention on the Rights of the Child;

(d) To consider, within the framework of the preparation and dissemination of printed information in the field of human rights, to issue a special publication designed to make the principles and provisions of the Convention widely known to children;

3. Requests the Secretary-General to ensure that the United Nations information centres or, in the countries where such information centres do not exist, the United Nations Development Programme country offices, make freely available on a routine basis the documents of the Committee for general distribution, particularly the reports of the Committee, the reports submitted to the Committee by the State in whose territory the information centre is located, and the summary records relating to the examination of the reports;

4. Also requests the Secretary-General to strengthen, in the framework of the technical assistance and advisory services programme of the Centre for Human Rights, the training activities related to the implementation of the Convention, as well as the organization of seminars and workshops at the national and local level for the purpose of training those involved in the preparation of State party reports in accordance with the adopted reporting guidelines;

5. Encourages the Secretary-General to consider, within the technical assistance and advisory services programme, providing training and assistance to the national institutions acting in the field of the rights of the child;

6. Also encourages the Secretary-General to consider the implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child as a priority matter within the fellowship programme;

7. Invites States parties to pay particular attention to the need for translating and publishing the Convention in the various local languages, as a means to ensure that the principles and provisions thereof are made widely known, by appropriate and active means, to adults and children alike.

Third session, Recommendation 2

Dissemination of information

The Committee on the Rights of the Child, 15/

Recognizing the importance of disseminating information on the Convention on the Rights of the Child and on its implementation system with a view to creating greater awareness and to promoting the realization of the rights of the child,

Reaffirming the importance of ensuring that the United Nations information centres or, in the countries where such information centres do not exist, the United Nations Development Programme country offices, make freely available on a routine basis the documents of the Committee for general distribution,

1. Requests the Secretary-General to ensure that particular consideration be given to the availability of the reports of the Committee, the reports submitted to the Committee by the State in whose territory the information centre is located, as well as the summary records relating to the examination of the reports and the concluding observations adopted thereon by the Committee;

2. Recommends that, in order to ensure easier access to these documents and to assist States parties in their endeavour to ensure that their reports are made widely available to the public in their own country, in the light of article 44, paragraph 6, of the Convention, serious consideration be given to the issuing of a compilation containing the State party report, the summary records relevant to its consideration and the concluding observations adopted thereon by the Committee.

Sixth session, Recommendation 1

Dissemination of information

The Committee on the Rights of the Child, 16/

Recognizing the importance of the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the political commitment expressed towards its effective implementation by the unprecedented number of ratifications,

Recalling that the World Conference on Human Rights, in its final document, urged the universal ratification of the Convention by 1995 and its effective implementation by States parties,

Recalling also the high expectations for the effective functioning of the Committee, as an essential mechanism for the implementation of the Convention,

Recognizing the importance of promoting greater awareness of the principles and provisions of the Convention, as well as of its implementation system, including the activities developed by the Committee as a treaty monitoring body,

Decides to request the Secretary-General to ensure the translation of the reports of the Committee on each of its sessions into the official languages of the United Nations.

VI. DOCUMENTATION UNIT ON THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD

Third session. Recommendation 4

The Committee on the Rights of the Child, 17/

Reaffirming the importance of ensuring its access to all relevant sources of information pertaining to its functions,

Recognizing the need to ensure effective cooperation and constructive dialogue with United Nations bodies active in the field of the rights of the child, in particular the Special Rapporteur of the Commission on Human Rights on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography and the Working Group on Contemporary Forms of Slavery of the Sub-Commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities,

Recalling the recommendation made by the Fourth Meeting of Persons Chairing the Human Rights Treaty Bodies that a centralized information and documentation unit be created within the Centre for Human Rights,

Recommends that consideration be given to the establishment, within the Centre for Human Rights, of a documentation unit on the rights of the child, entrusted with the task of following and assisting the activities developed by the Committee on the Rights of the Child, the Special Rapporteur of the Commission on Human Rights on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography and the Working Group on Contemporary Forms of Slavery of the Sub-Commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities.

VII. RELATIONS WITH OTHER UNITED NATIONS ORGANS AND TREATY BODIES

First session. Recommendation 3

The Committee on the Rights of the Child, 18/

Recognizing the importance of establishing effective communication and dialogue with the other human rights treaty bodies on common issues and problems,

Considering the need to ensure its participation in activities taking place within the United Nations which are of relevance to its work,

1. Welcomes and endorses the recommendation made by the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights to hold, possibly in 1992, a meeting with members of that Committee as well as with members of the Human Rights Committee, the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women and the Committee on the Rights of the Child, with a view to discussing matters of mutual interest relating to the rights of the child;

2. Welcomes the opportunity to participate in the future meetings of persons chairing the human rights treaty bodies;

3. Resolves to follow, as appropriate, the meetings and activities of other human rights treaty bodies and notes with particular interest the intention of the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights to hold, during its sixth session, a general discussion on the question of social and economic indicators;

4. Welcomes the possibility of participating in the seminar of experts on appropriate indicators to measure achievements in the progressive realization of economic, social and cultural rights to be organized under the United Nations programme of human rights activities in 1991-1993, as requested by the Commission on Human Rights and as endorsed by the Economic and Social Council.

Second session, Recommendation 4

The Committee on the Rights of the Child, 19/

Recognizing the importance of ensuring effective interaction and cooperation with United Nations bodies acting in the field of the rights of the child, including the Special Rapporteur of the Commission on Human Rights on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography, and the Working Group on Contemporary Forms of Slavery of the Sub-Commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities,

Recognizing also the need to maintain effective communication and dialogue with the other human rights bodies on common issues and problems,

Considering the need and importance of ensuring its participation in activities taking place within the United Nations framework which are of relevance to its work,

Encouraged by Commission on Human Rights resolution 1992/15 in which the Commission stressed the continuing need for consultation and exchange of information among all treaty bodies,

1. Welcomes the possibility of holding future meetings with the United Nations bodies acting in the field of the rights of the child, including each of the treaty bodies, with a view to discussing matters of mutual interest;

2. Decides to follow, as appropriate, the meetings and activities of other human rights treaty bodies, as well as other United Nations meetings relevant to its work;

3. Welcomes the holding of the Meetings of Persons Chairing the Human Rights Treaty Bodies on a biennial basis;

4. Welcomes the opportunity to participate in the seminar of experts on appropriate indicators to measure achievements in the progressive realization of economic, social and cultural rights, to be held in December 1992;

5. Welcomes the opportunity to participate in the meeting of experts on the application of international standards concerning the human rights of detained juveniles to be organized in Geneva in March 1993, following a proposal of the Secretary-General endorsed by the Sub-Commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities in its resolution 1992/25, where a wish is expressed to see the Committee on the Rights of the Child represented at the meeting of experts;

6. Expresses the hope that adequate resources will be provided to enable the Committee to develop effective communication and dialogue with other human rights bodies and to participate in United Nations meetings relevant to its work;

7. Invites special rapporteurs appointed by the Commission on Human Rights and the Sub-Commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities and working groups established by the Commission and the Sub-Commission to take the Convention on the Rights of the Child into consideration within the framework of their respective mandates;

8. Welcomes the opportunity the second session has provided for starting a constructive and meaningful dialogue with the Special Rapporteur on the sale of children on questions of common concern, namely on the question of child soldiers, and expresses its willingness to pursue this dialogue at its future sessions.

Third session, Recommendation 3

The Committee on the Rights of the Child, 20/

Recognizing the importance of ensuring effective interaction and cooperation with United Nations bodies active in the field of the rights of the child,

Recognizing also the need to maintain effective communication and meaningful dialogue with the other human rights bodies on issues of common interest,

Considering the need for and the importance of ensuring its active participation in activities taking place within the United Nations framework which are of relevance to its work,

Recalling the emphasis put by the Fourth Meeting of Persons Chairing the Human Rights Treaty Bodies on the promotion of interaction among treaty bodies,

Reaffirming the decisions and recommendations adopted at its previous sessions,

1. Stresses the need for providing the Committee with adequate resources to enable it to develop effective communication and dialogue with other human rights bodies and to participate in United Nations meetings relevant to its work;

2. Reaffirms its interest and willingness to participate in the proposed meeting of experts on the application of international standards concerning the human rights of detained juveniles, and recalls the important framework established by the Convention on the Rights of the Child in this field;

3. Decides to follow closely the preparation process of the International Year of the Family and, in its framework, to strengthen its cooperation with the Centre for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs, in particular with a view to being associated with that event and having access to the relevant documents and studies;

4. Requests the Special Rapporteur of the Commission on Human Rights on the situation of human rights in the territory of the former Yugoslavia to take the Convention on the Rights of the Child into full consideration in the fulfilment of his mandate and in his future reports.

Fourth session. Recommendation 4

Cooperation with other United Nations bodies and treaty bodies

The Committee on the Rights of the Child, 21/

Reaffirming the importance of ensuring effective interaction and cooperation with United Nations bodies acting in the field of the rights of the child,

Recognizing the need to maintain effective dialogue and communication with other human rights bodies on common issues and problems,

Recalling the recommendation of the World Conference on Human Rights that matters relating to human rights and the situation of children be regularly reviewed and monitored by all relevant organs and mechanisms of the United Nations system,

1. Reaffirms the need for providing the Committee with adequate resources to enable it to develop effective communication and dialogue with other human rights bodies and to participate in United Nations meetings relevant to its work;

2. Requests the secretariat to transmit its reports to the special rapporteurs and working groups established by the Commission on Human Rights and the Sub-Commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities;

3. Invites such special rapporteurs and working groups to take the Convention on the Rights of the Child into consideration within the framework of their respective mandates;

4. Requests the secretariat to transmit the reports of the Committee to United Nations bodies whose activities are relevant to the implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, including the international financial institutions;

5. Decides to follow closely the developments related to the International Year of the Family, the International Conference on Population Development and the World Summit for Social Development;

6. Recognizes the importance of being associated with the preparatory process for the World Conference on Women, to take place in Beijing in 1995, and in this framework decides to devote one of its future meetings to the consideration of its contribution to this event.

Fifth session, Recommendation 3

The Committee on the Rights of the Child, 22/

Reaffirming the importance of ensuring effective interaction and cooperation with United Nations bodies acting in the field of the rights of the child,

Recognizing the need to maintain an effective dialogue with other human rights bodies on common issues and problems,

Recalling the Vienna statement adopted by the international human rights treaty bodies (A/CONF.157/TBB/4), which stressed the need to accord high priority to efforts designed to promote greater coordination among the various international treaty bodies,

Further recalling the recommendation adopted by the World Conference on Human Rights that matters relating to human rights and the situation of children be regularly reviewed and monitored by all relevant organs and mechanisms of the United Nations system,

Reaffirming the need to provide the Committee with adequate resources to enable it to develop effective communication and dialogue with other human rights bodies and to participate effectively in United Nations meetings relevant to its work,

1. Decides to be represented at, and to that end to closely follow, the preparatory process of the World Summit for Social Development, to take place in March 1995, in Denmark, as well as of the World Conference on Women, to take place in Beijing in 1995;

2. Also decides to be represented by two of its members at the International Conference on Population Development, to be held in Cairo in September 1994;

3. Reaffirms the fundamental importance it attaches to its participation in the meeting of experts on the application of international standards concerning the human rights of detained juveniles, to be organized in Geneva in 1994, in the light of resolution 1993/80 adopted by the Commission on Human Rights, and recalls in this regard the recommendations formulated by the Committee in the framework of the consideration of States parties' reports;

4. Decides to follow closely the general discussions to be held by the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights in 1994, on "the role of social safety nets as a means of protecting economic, social and cultural rights, with particular reference to situations involving major structural adjustment and/or transition to a free market economy" and on "human rights education and public information", and stresses the important attention it has given to these areas, namely in the framework of its dialogue with States parties.

Sixth session. Recommendation 2

Children in armed conflicts

The Committee on the Rights of the Child, 23/

Recalling its general discussion on the topic "Children in armed conflicts" and the recommendations adopted thereon,

Taking into consideration the serious attention paid by the General Assembly and the Commission on Human Rights to this question and the important resolutions adopted in this field,

Encouraged by the support expressed by the World Conference on Human Rights to the Committee's proposal that the Secretary-General initiate a study of means of improving the protection of children in armed conflicts,

Taking note of the request addressed to it by the World Conference on Human Rights to study the question of raising the minimum age of recruitment into armed forces,

Having submitted to the Commission on Human Rights at its fiftieth session the preliminary draft optional protocol the Committee had prepared on this issue at its third session (E/CN.4/1994/91),

1. Welcomes the decision of the Commission on Human Rights to establish an open-ended working group to elaborate, as a matter of priority, a draft optional protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child and to use as a basis for its discussions the preliminary draft submitted by the Committee on the Rights of the Child;

2. Decides to submit, in the light of the invitation addressed to it by the Secretary-General, its comments on this important issue, for consideration by the working group;

3. Also decides to prepare such comments in the light of the thematic general discussion it had previously held on the question "Children in armed conflicts" and to make available to the working group the relevant chapters of its reports on this same issue.

Sixth session. Recommendation 3

Sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography

The Committee on the Rights of the Child, 24/

Recalling its general discussion on the topic "Economic exploitation of children" and the recommendations adopted thereon,

Having considered the attention paid by the General Assembly and the Commission on Human Rights to the question of the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography and the resolutions adopted by them in this field,

Taking note of the adoption by the Commission on Human Rights of resolution 1994/90 of 9 March 1994 entitled "Need to adopt effective international measures for the prevention and eradication of the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography",

Encouraged that the Commission on Human Rights in its resolution recognized the essential value of the Convention on the Rights of the Child and its effective implementation system at the national and international levels as an essential means to prevent and combat situations of sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography,

Encouraged also by the appeal to all States made in the resolution to adopt the necessary measures to eradicate more effectively the practices of the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography,

Recalling the consideration given by the Committee to General Assembly resolution 48/156 of 20 December 1993 on the same issue, as reflected in the report on the Committee's fifth session (CRC/C/24, paras. 159-161),

Recalling also the importance it attaches to ensuring close cooperation with the Special Rapporteur on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography and to the various meetings held with him to exchange views on matters of common concern,

1. Taking note of the decision of the Commission on Human Rights to establish an open-ended working group responsible for elaborating, as a matter of priority, in close cooperation with the Special Rapporteur and the Committee on the Rights of the Child, guidelines for a possible draft optional protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography, as well as the basic measures needed for their prevention and eradication;

2. Decides to submit, in the light of the invitation addressed to it by the Secretary-General, its comments on guidelines for a possible draft optional protocol for consideration by the working group;

3. Also decides to prepare such comments in the light of the thematic general discussion held on the topic "Economic exploitation of children" and to make available to the working group the relevant chapters of its reports on this issue, in order to ensure that due consideration is given by the working group to the recommendations included therein;

4. Reaffirms the important framework established by the Convention on the Rights of the Child to deal with situations of sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography, and in particular in order to improve the system of prevention, as well as the protection and rehabilitation of children, at the national, bilateral and multilateral levels;

5. Recalls that the World Conference on Human Rights in the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action called on States to integrate the Convention on the Rights of the Child into their national action plans;

6. Stresses the decisive political commitment expressed by an unprecedented number of States to the effective implementation of the Convention;

7. Reaffirms that States parties should adopt all appropriate measures to ensure and respect the rights recognized in the Convention for each child without discrimination of any kind, the best interests of the child being their primary consideration and due weight being given to the views expressed by the child;

8. Stresses that the child affected by situations of sale, prostitution and pornography should be considered mainly as a victim and that all measures adopted should ensure full respect for his or her human dignity, as well as special protection and support within the family and society;

9. Encourages the working group, within the framework of its mandate, to consider the holistic approach of the Convention on the Rights of the Child to the fundamental rights of children, as a continuous source of inspiration;

10. Expresses the hope that the activities developed by the Committee, in particular in the field of the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography, will be given due weight by the working group.

Eighth session. Recommendation

Participation and contribution to the Fourth World Conference on Women: Action for Equality, Development and Peace

The Committee on the Rights of the Child, 25/

Recognizing the importance of maintaining effective communication and meaningful dialogue with United Nations bodies active in the field of human rights in general and children's rights in particular,

Considering the need to ensure its active participation in activities of relevance to its work which are taking place within the framework of the United Nations system-wide action,

Recalling its previous decision to be represented at, and actively contribute to, the preparatory process of the Fourth World Conference on Women: Action for Equality, Development and Peace, to take place in September 1995 in Beijing,

Encouraged by the richness of the debate held at its eighth session during its thematic day of general discussion on the girl child,

Reaffirming the importance of the Convention on the Rights of the Child and of its implementation process in decisively improving the situation of girls around the world and ensuring the full realization of their fundamental rights,

Recalling that, as stressed by the World Conference on Human Rights, the human rights of women and the girl child are an inalienable, integral and indivisible part of human rights,

Recalling also that the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women have a complementary and mutually reinforcing nature, and recommending that they should be an essential framework for a forward-looking strategy to promote and protect the fundamental rights of girls and women and decisively eradicate inequality and discrimination,

1. Reaffirms its decision to participate in the Fourth World Conference on Women: Action for Equality, Development and Peace, to take place in September 1995 in Beijing, and requests the Secretariat to adopt all necessary measures to allow for such participation;

2. Decides to transmit the content of the general discussion on the girl child, as reflected in the report of its eighth session, to the secretariat of the Fourth World Conference on Women;

3. Requests that the Platform for Action for the Conference reflect throughout its different chapters the situation and the fundamental rights of the girl child, namely in the areas specifically addressed during the general discussion of the Committee, as reflected in the report of its eighth session;

4. Also requests that the Committee on the Rights of the Child be clearly considered as an essential mechanism within the framework of the international machinery that will be entrusted with the task of monitoring and periodically reviewing the implementation of the Platform for Action.

Ninth session. Recommendation

The Committee on the Rights of the Child, 26/

Reaffirming the importance it attaches to maintaining effective cooperation and meaningful dialogue with United Nations bodies active in the field of human rights in general and children's rights in particular,

Recognizing the need to ensure its active participation in activities of relevance to its work which are taking place within the framework of United Nations system-wide action,

Recalling that, as stressed by the World Conference on Human Rights, the human rights of women and the girl child are an inalienable, integral and indivisible part of human rights and should be integrated into the mainstream of United Nations system-wide activity and regularly and systematically addressed throughout the relevant United Nations organs and mechanisms,

Recalling also that the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women have a complementary and mutually reinforcing nature, and that they constitute an essential framework for a forward-looking strategy to promote and protect the fundamental rights of girls and women and decisively eradicate inequality and discrimination,

1. Reiterates its decision to be represented at, and actively contribute to, the Fourth World Conference on Women: Action for Equality, Development and Peace;

2. Decides to be represented by two of its members and urges the Secretariat to adopt all necessary measures to ensure their participation;

3. Also decides to continue to follow closely the drafting process of the Platform for Action with a view to ensuring that the situation and the fundamental rights of the girl child are clearly reflected throughout the document and adequately addressed in the relevant separate chapter included therein;

4. Reaffirms the importance of also including the Committee on the Rights of the Child as an essential mechanism within the framework of the international machinery to be entrusted with the task of monitoring and periodically reviewing the implementation of the Platform for Action.

Eleventh session. Recommendation 27/

The Committee on the Rights of the Child,

Reaffirming the importance it attaches to maintaining effective cooperation and meaningful dialogue with United Nations bodies active in the field of human rights and in areas of importance to the realization of children's rights,

Recognizing the need to ensure its active participation in activities of relevance to its work which are taking place within the framework of United Nations system-wide action,

Stressing the importance of ensuring the involvement of the Committee in the United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat II) and in its preparatory process,

Recalling the importance of the right to housing as an illustration of the indivisibility and interdependence of children's human rights,

1. Welcomes the participation of the Committee in the Expert Group Meeting on the Human Right to Adequate Housing, organized by the Centre for Human Rights and the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat) as well as the attention paid by the Meeting to the specific situation of children;

2. Also welcomes the decision of the United Nations Children's Fund to organize, in cooperation with the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat) an expert seminar on children's rights, housing and neighbourhood, which will take as a basic reference the principles and provisions of the Convention on the Rights of the Child;

3. Decides to be represented by one of its members at that expert seminar and urges the Secretariat to adopt all necessary measures to ensure such participation;

4. Also decides to submit a written contribution to the United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat II) and follow closely the drafting process of the Habitat Agenda with a view to ensuring that the situation and the fundamental right to adequate housing of children are clearly reflected in the document;

5. Stresses the importance of ensuring the participation of a joint delegation of human rights treaty bodies in the Habitat II Conference as a means to reinforce the human rights component in the deliberations of and follow-up to the Conference.

Seventeenth session, Recommendation 2

The Committee on the Rights of the Child, 28/

Welcoming the progress made by the Preparatory Committee on the Establishment of an International Criminal Court (ICC) in preparing a draft consolidated text of a convention on the establishment of an International Criminal Court,

Welcoming also resolution 52/160 adopted by the General Assembly on 15 December 1997, in which the Assembly decided, inter alia, that the United Nations Conference of Plenipotentiaries on the Establishment of an International Criminal Court shall be held in Rome from 15 June to 17 July 1998, with a view to finalizing and adopting a convention on the establishment of such a Court,

Emphasizing the importance of ensuring that, in creating a permanent mechanism for the prevention and punishment of serious crimes of concern to the international community as a whole, the statute of the International Criminal Court duly take into account the need to protect the rights of children, both as victims and possible perpetrators of the said crimes, in accordance with the principles and provisions set forth by the Convention on the Rights of the Child,

Considering that, in this respect, special attention should be devoted to the issues of definition of war crimes, age of criminal responsibility, aggravating and mitigating circumstances of the crimes and the protection of the rights of the child within the Court's jurisdiction,

Recalling that, under article 43, paragraph 1 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, the Committee was established "for the purpose of examining the progress made by States parties in achieving the realization of the obligations undertaken" in the Convention,

1. Recommends to all States parties to and signatories of the Convention on the Rights of the Child to operate, in the Preparatory Committee on the Establishment of an International Criminal Court and at the 1998 Rome Diplomatic Conference, with a view to ensuring that the provisions of the ICC statute be in line with the principles and provisions of the Convention on the Rights of the Child with respect to the various aspects of the protection of children's rights;

2. Further recommends that special attention be devoted, in this context, to the rights of the child in the areas of definition of war crimes, age of criminal responsibility, aggravating and mitigating circumstances of the crimes and the protection of the rights of the child victim within the Court's jurisdiction.

VIII. MEETING OF PERSONS CHAIRING THE HUMAN RIGHTS TREATY BODIES

Second session, Recommendation 5

The Committee on the Rights of the Child, 29/

Recognizing the importance of contributing to the Fourth Meeting of Persons Chairing the Human Rights Treaty Bodies,

Bearing in mind its proceedings and decisions on issues of relevance to the agenda of such a meeting,

Decides to bring the following important issues to the attention of the Fourth Meeting of Persons Chairing the Human Rights Treaty Bodies:

A.

The innovating experience of holding informal meetings at the regional level should be brought to the attention of the Fourth Meeting, in view of its relevance as a means to promote greater awareness of the Convention on the Rights of the Child and its system of implementation, and to provide the Committee with a deeper knowledge and better understanding of the realities of a region.

B.

Access to all relevant sources of information pertaining to the functions of the Committee on the Rights of the Child is essential. In this framework the Committee, recognizing the high priority of the computerization of the work of the treaty-monitoring bodies, encourages the Fourth Meeting of Persons Chairing the Human Rights Treaty Bodies to give particular consideration to this reality and to envisage the adoption of adequate and urgent recommendations. The Committee also decides to establish a working group from among its members to consider the question of the system of information and documentation relevant to its work, including the question of computerization, in cooperation with the Centre for Human Rights, United Nations bodies and other competent bodies.

C.

In view of the importance of disseminating information on the Convention on the Rights of the Child and its monitoring mechanism in order to enhance implementation of the Convention, the Committee on the Rights of the Child:

(a) Requests the Secretary-General to make documents of the Committee classified in the general distribution category freely available, on a routine basis, in the United Nations information centres or, in the countries where centres do not exist, in the country offices of the United Nations Development Programme;

(b) Encourages the Secretary-General to consider providing training and assistance to the national institutions acting in the field of the rights of the child, within the technical assistance and advisory services programme.

D.

In connection with the issue of reservations and declarations, the Committee deems it is important to recall that the Convention has introduced a holistic approach to the rights of the child, all rights being interrelated and inherent to the dignity of the child.

E.

The Committee recognizes the relevance of handling the question of reservations and declarations in the course of the dialogue to be established with States parties when considering their periodic reports.

IX. WORLD CONFERENCE ON HUMAN RIGHTS - RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE PREPARATORY COMMITTEE

First session. Recommendation 5

The Committee on the Rights of the Child, 30/

Pursuant to the paragraph 9 of General Assembly resolution 45/155 of 18 December 1990 and paragraph 5 of Commission on Human Rights resolution 1991/30 of 5 March 1991,

1. Designates its Chairperson as its representative to the meetings of the Preparatory Committee for the World Conference on Human Rights;

2. Adopts the following recommendations:

(a) A specific item relating to the activities of the human rights treaty bodies should be included in the agenda of the World Conference;

(b) The agenda of the Conference should be organized in a manner that the rights of the child are given due emphasis. A specific item should also be included for the purpose of discussing the Convention on the Rights of the Child as an illustration of the indivisibility and interrelationship of different human rights;

(c) The list of issues to be explored during the preparatory process should include:

(i) Improving the effectiveness of the existing human rights treaty bodies;

(ii) Ways and means of strengthening the material and human resources of the Centre for Human Rights;

(d) All members of the treaty bodies of the United Nations human rights system should be invited to participate in the World Conference;

(e) A meeting of members of human rights treaty bodies should be convened as part of the preparatory process in order to facilitate a comprehensive evaluation of the work of the treaty bodies with a view to making recommendations for the improvement of their functioning;

(f) The holding of national, regional and international workshops and seminars should be encouraged during the preparatory process and their results should be presented to the World Conference;

(g) Special studies should be undertaken during the preparatory process to enable the World Conference to implement the provisions contained in paragraph 1 (b) of General Assembly resolution 45/155.

Third session. Recommendation 5

The Committee on the Rights of the Child, 31/

Recalling its previous recommendations addressed to the Preparatory Committee for the World Conference on Human Rights,

Considering that the General Assembly at its forty-seventh session adopted the provisional agenda for the World Conference on Human Rights,

Noting the inclusion in the provisional agenda of an item entitled "Consideration of contemporary trends in and new challenges to the full realization of all human rights of women and men, including those of persons belonging to vulnerable groups",

Recognizing the importance of considering in this framework the question of the enjoyment of the rights of the child in a period of armed conflict,

1. Designates its Chairperson and its Rapporteur as its representatives to the fourth session of the Preparatory Committee for the World Conference;

2. Decides to recommend to the Preparatory Committee to address at its fourth session the issue of the involvement of children in armed conflicts.

X. CHILDREN IN ARMED CONFLICTS

Third session. Recommendation 1

The Committee on the Rights of the Child, 32/

Recalling that in accordance with the provisions of article 45 (c) of the Convention, the Committee may recommend to the General Assembly to request the Secretary-General to undertake, on its behalf, studies on specific issues relating to the rights of the child,

Further recalling that at its second session the Committee devoted one day to a general discussion on the topic "Children in armed conflicts", having discussed the relevance and adequacy of existing standards applicable in the framework of children in armed conflicts; the measures to ensure effective protection to children in situations of armed conflicts and the promotion of physical and psychological recovery and social reintegration,

Having concluded that in order to focus greater attention on the serious problem of children in armed conflicts, a major United Nations study should be undertaken,

1. Recommends to the General Assembly, in accordance with article 45 (c) of the Convention, that it request the Secretary-General to undertake a study on ways and means of improving the protection of

children from the adverse effects of armed conflicts; for this purpose, the Secretary-General might wish to invite the cooperation of relevant specialized agencies, other United Nations organs, non-governmental organizations and the International Committee of the Red Cross;

2. Requests the Secretary-General to bring this recommendation to the attention of the General Assembly for consideration at its forty-eighth session.

Fourth session, Recommendation 5

The Committee on the Rights of the Child, 33/

Recalling its general discussion on the topic "Children in armed conflicts" and the recommendations adopted thereon,

Having considered the serious attention paid by the Commission on Human Rights to this question and the important resolutions adopted by the Commission in this field,

Encouraged by the support expressed by the World Conference on Human Rights to the Committee's proposal that the Secretary-General initiate a study of means of improving the protection of children in armed conflicts,

Taking note of the request addressed to it by the World Conference on Human Rights to study the question of raising the minimum age of recruitment into armed forces,

Requests the Secretary-General to transmit to the Commission on Human Rights at its fiftieth session the preliminary draft optional protocol the Committee had prepared on this issue at its third session (CRC/C/16, annex VII).

Sixth session, Recommendation 2 34/

See above, Chapter VII, Sixth session, Recommendation 2.

Seventh session, Recommendation 1 35/

The Committee on the Rights of the Child,

Recalling its general discussion on the topic "Children in armed conflicts" and the recommendations adopted thereon,

Taking into consideration the attention paid by the General Assembly and the Commission on Human Rights to this question,

Recalling the decision of the Commission on Human Rights to establish a working group to elaborate a draft optional protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the involvement of children in armed conflicts, and to use as a basis for its discussions the preliminary draft submitted by the Committee on the Rights of the Child,

Recalling also the support expressed by the World Conference on Human Rights for the Committee's recommendation that a major study be initiated on the means of improving the protection of children in armed conflicts,

Taking into consideration General Assembly resolution 48/157 of 20 December 1993 in which the Assembly requested the Secretary-General to appoint an expert to undertake a comprehensive study of this question,

1. Welcomes the appointment of Mrs. Garça Machel as the expert entrusted with the task of carrying out this study;

2. Also welcomes the opportunity of meeting Mrs. Machel and exchange views with her on the main areas to be covered by the study;

3. Decides to cooperate closely with Mrs. Machel in the preparation of this major study.

Nineteenth session. Recommendation 36/

The Committee on the Rights of the Child,

Recalling that at its second session in 1992 the Committee devoted one day to a general discussion on the topic "Children in armed conflict" at which the relevance and adequacy of existing standards were discussed,

Noting the similarity of the conclusions on the negative effects of armed conflicts on children reached by the expert of the Secretary-General in her 1996 study entitled "The impact of armed conflict on children" (A/51/306 and Add.1) and by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on the impact of armed conflict on children,

Recalling that at its third session it prepared a preliminary draft optional protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child (E/CN.4/1994/91, annex) that it submitted to the Commission on Human Rights at its fiftieth session,

Having welcomed the subsequent decision of the Commission on Human Rights, as contained in its resolution 1994/91, to establish an open-ended inter-sessional working group to elaborate, as a matter of priority, a draft optional protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the involvement of children in armed conflict,

Noting that the working group has met yearly since 1995 and that it was unable, at its fourth session held in February 1998, to reach agreement on a draft text which could be adopted by consensus,

Welcoming Commission resolution 1998/76 and the request to the Secretary-General to invite the Committee, inter alia, to submit comments and suggestions on the report of the working group,

Reiterating its growing alarm, upon its examination of a large number of reports of States parties on their implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, at the deeply tragic consequences of the involvement of children in armed conflict,

1. Expresses its concern at the delays experienced in the process of drafting and adopting the optional protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the involvement of children in armed conflict;

2. Recalls that the function of optional protocols is to promote the progressive development of international law by enabling those States that are willing to adopt more demanding standards to do so;

3. Reaffirms its belief that this new legal instrument is urgently needed in order to strengthen the levels of protection ensured by the Convention;

4. Stresses the special responsibility of States parties to the Convention on the Rights of the Child in the search for the most protective solutions, guided by the best interests of the child;

5. Recalls its major recommendation on the fundamental importance of raising the age of all forms of recruitment of children into the armed forces to 18 years and the prohibition of their involvement in hostilities;

6. Also recalls that adoption of the optional protocol will provide an opportunity for States parties that are in a position to do so, and them alone, to accept its provisions by ratification or adherence;

7. Expresses the hope that States that are not yet in a position to accept the 18-year age limit will not prevent the adoption of the optional protocol by other Governments;

8. Invites States parties to make every effort to facilitate the adoption of the optional protocol on the involvement of children in armed conflict before the tenth anniversary of the adoption of the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

XI. ADVISORY SERVICES AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

Seventh session, Recommendation 3 37/

The Committee on the Rights of the Child,

Recognizing the decisive role of the programme of advisory services and technical assistance of the Centre for Human Rights in the promotion of human rights in general and children's rights in particular,

Recognizing also that, as stressed by the World Conference on Human Rights, such assistance should be made available on specific human rights issues, as in the case of the preparation of reports under human rights treaties, for the implementation of coherent and comprehensive plans of action for the promotion and protection of human rights or with a view to strengthening an independent administration of justice, in the light of applicable human rights standards adopted by the United Nations,

Recalling the importance it has systematically attached, in the light of article 45 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, to the areas of technical advice or assistance designed to promote a growing awareness and a more effective implementation of this international instrument,

Reaffirming the importance of identifying specific areas where technical advice or assistance programmes would seem appropriate, following the consideration of a State party report, as well as of ensuring a system of periodic evaluation and follow-up to such programmes,

1. Reaffirms its willingness to continue to cooperate with the Centre for Human Rights, other relevant bodies within the United Nations system as well as other competent bodies, including non-governmental organizations;

2. Welcomes the invitation addressed by the Commission on Human Rights to human rights bodies, including the Committee on the Rights of the Child, to indicate in their recommendations proposals for specific projects to be realized under the programme of technical assistance and advisory services of the Centre for Human Rights, such as the organization of seminars and training courses and the drafting of basic legal texts in conformity with international conventions on human rights;

3. Decides to continue to identify the main areas where technical advice or assistance would seem appropriate to foster the implementation of the Convention and to indicate them in the preliminary or concluding observations adopted following the consideration of States parties reports;

4. Also decides to bring the recommendations it may adopt in this regard to the consideration of the concerned bodies, including United Nations organs, the specialized agencies and other competent bodies, as well as to the programme of technical assistance and advisory services of the Centre for Human Rights.

Notes

1/ See A/47/41, Recommendation 1.

2/ See CRC/C/20, Recommendation 1.

3/ See CRC/C/24, Recommendation 1.

4/ See CRC/C/24, Recommendation 2.

5/ See CRC/C/69, Recommendation.

6/ See CRC/C/73, Recommendation 1.

7/ See CRC/C/20, Recommendation 2.

8/ See CRC/C/10, Recommendation 1.

9/ See CRC/C/20, Recommendation 3.

10/ See CRC/C/34, Recommendation 2.

11/ See A/47/41, Recommendation 2.

12/ See CRC/C/10, Recommendation 2.

13/ See A/47/41, Recommendation 4.

14/ See CRC/C/10, Recommendation 3.

15/ See CRC/C/16, Recommendation 2.

16/ See CRC/C/29, Recommendation 1.

17/ See CRC/C/16, Recommendation 4.

18/ See A/47/41, Recommendation 3.

19/ See CRC/C/10, Recommendation 4.

20/ See CRC/C/16, Recommendation 3.

21/ See CRC/C/20, Recommendation 4.

22/ See CRC/C/24, Recommendation 3.

23/ See CRC/C/29, Recommendation 2.

24/ See CRC/C/29, Recommendation 3.

25/ See CRC/C/38, Recommendation.

26/ See CRC/C/43, Recommendation.

27/ See CRC/C/50, Recommendation.

28/ See CRC/C/73, Recommendation 2.

29/ See CRC/C/10, Recommendation 5.

30/ See A/47/41, Recommendation 5.

31/ See CRC/C/16, Recommendation 5.

32/ See CRC/C/16, Recommendation 1.

33/ See CRC/C/20, Recommendation 5.

34/ See CRC/C/29, Recommendation 2.

35/ See CRC/C/34, Recommendation 1.

36/ See CRC/C/80, Recommendation.

37/ See CRC/C/34, Recommendation 3.